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Time and again was Buninia visited by the same spirits in his dreams. Sometimes they left him the large knitted bags, called *ase*, which are used for carrying taro; sometimes the special kinds of pots and dishes in which the taro was to be cooked; sometimes the wooden prong or fork with which it was to be eaten. All these things he showed to his people and instructed them in their proper use. So also he taught them the dance and the various other elements, trivial enough, of the new religion.

But all this did not happen at once. Buninia volunteered the very significant information that from his youth up he had been subject to shaking-fits, some mild kind of seizures, which were not seriously regarded by his friends. According to his own view—about which he was entirely confident—these seizures had been caused from the beginning by the taro spirits in possession of his body, but he had not realized this until it all became clear through his dream.

What might be called the inauguration of the cult occurred at Taututu. Buninia was sitting quietly with his lime-pot in his lap and enjoying a little stimulant, when suddenly he found himself again attacked by one of his paroxysms. This time he began to shout, '*Ba, ba, ba!*' i.e. 'Taro, taro!' His brother, one Oriva, ran to his assistance, no doubt much alarmed, but Buninia dispatched him to call together all the neighbouring villages. People flocked to the scene from Deboi, Duvira, Tsia, and Bebewa. The new prophet continued to shake violently. As the people watched him they one and all fell into the same condition. Buninia harangued them and expounded the doctrines of the taro spirits. He fixed his attention in particular on his friend Yaviripa, and cried shame upon him for not making a feast. Meanwhile the *jipari*, or shaking-fit, continued to affect the bystanders; but at Buninia's word they returned, temporarily at least, to their senses, and were dismissed to their villages. They all 'had the Taro', and the new cult was launched.

Similar outbreaks occurred again and again. When

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6. *Prophets and Converts*

The means of disseminating the Taro cult have already been discussed in general terms: we have seen that they are (*a*) contact transmission and (*b*) active proselytism. In this section it is proposed to deal with the individual Taro man, and especially the way in which he becomes a Taro man. It is obvious to the native as well as to ourselves that the cult is passed on from one man to another, but it is generally claimed by the convert that he has received direct inspiration as well. Accordingly we may discuss the individual acquisition of the Taro under two headings, (*a*) Communicating the Taro, and (*b*) Direct Inspiration. Further, it will be of course understood that what is here set down is in the main the native's own explanation of these processes.

(*a*) *Communicating the Taro.* We have seen (p. 15) how Buninia in the early days not only instructed the people but communicated an influence to them by physical contact. There are many similar instances. Mere propinquity is enough. Thus we hear of a well-known character of the Wasida district, one Sihure (perhaps somewhat abnormal and on that account all the more celebrated as an exponent of the Taro), sitting surrounded closely by his friends who are anxious to receive the influence. Sihure chews betel very intemperately, until in due course the *jipari* or shaking-fit attacks him, and is unaccountably transmitted to the others who crowd around. Such an incident is easy to understand, but in others the connexion or the medium of transmission seems more than a little fanciful. A recognized instrument of passing on the Taro is the lime-pot: the master allows the prospective disciple to make use of his spatula and lime, and presently he, the latter, finds himself possessed. A man Taimi used to receive visits from the *binei* of his mother, and would constantly be afflicted with *jipari*. The way in which he communicated this *jipari* to a friend is worth recording in that it shows what

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remote associations may seem causally effective to a native. Taimi happened to leave his lime-stick in his house; his mother, or his mother's spirit, spat on it; subsequently Taimi prodded his friend in the stomach with the stick, by now in some manner galvanized, and his friend was seized with a paroxysm.

I have already referred to certain individual Taro men of distinction. The number of those who follow the cult in the Northern Division is not to be computed, but there are among them men of distinction and reputation who may be called leaders and who might be if necessary catalogued. Their pre-eminence is due partly to their own personality (for it is not every native who has the makings of a magician), and partly to mere priority. Thus, if one man communicates the Taro to another, the latter will probably recognize the former as his superior. This respect for superiors may sometimes take a comical turn. To see a Taro man, his face covered with paint and his limbs with streaks of clay, his body stuck about with sprigs of coloured leaves, and his wits bemused by betel-nut—to see such a man offer a grave salute, in the exaggerated style of the Native Constabulary, to his superior, whose attire and demeanour even outdo his own, is almost as diverting to the European as it is impressive to the native. This habit of deference to the initiator results in a sort of hierarchy, very ill-defined, as might be expected, because the cult shows such a tendency to split up into minor sects, but nevertheless containing the seeds of an interesting development.

The disciple sometimes has to undergo a kind of probation. Having once acquired the Taro he must, for a considerable period (until, indeed, it is thoroughly established or ingrained into him), observe certain taboos. The chief of these is the taboo against washing. There are instances in which the enthusiastic acolyte forgoes the pleasures of a midday bathe for as long as eight months. When the Taro cult had crept insidiously into one of the mission schools, its presence was first

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and *oro* the cry of welcome are the same words. *Oroda* appears to be simply *oro* with the associative particle *da*.

Another very quaint Taro password is '*Kia kia!*' uttered as a man is yawning, much as we would say, 'Oh dear!' No witness ever succeeded in explaining this curious custom, which, as far as I know, belongs to the Taro cult alone. It provides a good instance of the way in which details of practice are faithfully transmitted while their significance is entirely lost. A number of other Taro expressions have come into popular use in the same way. *Kasamba* and *tinogu* have been mentioned already, but there were numerous fictitious synonyms, possibly of a respectful or euphemistic character, which achieved some popularity although they were probably learned simply by rote. I am indebted to Mr. Elder for several examples: the dog (*sino*) was called *eupu*; sago (*ambe*) was called *orai*; and pigs (*pu*) were called *puyoroba*.

8. *The Jipari or Shaking-fit*

I now have to deal with what is the most disagreeable feature of the cult, viz. the uncontrolled bodily movements or paroxysms which, unfortunately, the Taro man believes to be an important part of his 'work'. These paroxysms were characteristic of the *Baigona* cult before, though they then took a form somewhat different. The word used by the *Baigona* men to describe this condition was usually *dutari*, to tremble. It might be used of the ague or shivering fit which is merely the result of cold; for instance, a youth after spending a long time in the river in pursuit of eels, was said to *dutari* when he was merely shivering violently. The expression most commonly employed for the shaking-fit of the Taro indicates a somewhat different style. *Jipari* is used of the sling (*tapai*) as it is whirled before the stone is released; also of a branch swaying or swinging in the wind. There is a certain well-known character among the Tain Daware tribe who is named Jipari. As so often among the

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Orokaiva, a nickname ousts a 'christening' name, and in this instance the nickname arose from an exploit well remembered by the hero and his friends. In a cannibal raid he was struck on the head with a stone club, but even after this experience managed to elude his enemy and rushed back to his friends. In response to their anxious inquiries, he could give no other answer for the time being than a violent shaking of the head. So, in commemoration of his signal hardihood and the manner in which his head had reacted under the blow, he was dubbed Jipari, or 'Shaker'. The movements of the shaking-fit are not confined to a jerking of the head, but since this is very characteristic, and, as far as I know, was not practised by the *Baigona* men, it has served as a distinctive name for the paroxysms of the Taro.

These manifestations should be distinguished from certain others which are more familiar. They are said by the natives to resemble madness or *yauyauri*, a term which includes everything between imbecility and a violent insanity. They are sometimes accompanied, I am told, by a swoon or trance, called *gishivi*; but the *gishivi* is of course a phenomenon well known to natives (though I have heard no explanation of it in native psychology). Thirdly, they resemble the temporary maniacal fit called *bibi*, which is said to be frequent enough, though I have seen no example of it. *Bibi* is evidently akin to the 'amok', and may be of a dangerous character. It is, however, a transient, and apparently an individual, not a collective, phenomenon.

We have already seen something of the shaking-fit among the dancers at Korisata (p. 20), but I may describe one or two definite instances in greater detail. A man named Tatiko was sitting on a verandah during a Taro feast. There was the usual amount of high spirits in the village but no sign of irrational behaviour among the others present. Without warning Tatiko began to shake violently, with a very rapid jerking of his limbs. His fists were clenched and his face contorted. The movements

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158 continued for a few moments and then he sank back against the wall of the house, with his head on his breast, and remained in this position for a while as if exhausted. He reeled slightly when trying to walk after his fit was over. He was subsequently affected several times in a similar manner, but standing, not sitting. The jerking and trembling would end in a peculiar tenseness of the limbs and body. He stood in an oblique position which must have involved some effort to prevent his falling.

Y 794 158 A lad of perhaps fourteen years was in the company of a number of *Diroga* men. While they performed their characteristic dance, he was staggering hither and thither among them, almost, but never quite, to the point of falling down. This boy was bright and intelligent and appeared able to act normally when he wished—in the pauses of the dancing, for instance. While he was under the influence of the *jipari* his eyes were vacant, and he was evidently more or less heedless of what was happening to him; nevertheless, despite the apparent recklessness of his conduct, he managed to avoid obstacles. He seemed to derive no small satisfaction from indulging in this very violent exercise, and as in the intervals he became his smiling self again, one can only conclude that he was wilfully surrendering himself to the *jipari*.

Among other subjects one may observe a simultaneous shaking of the limbs which, with a twisting of the features, resembles a kind of convulsion; sometimes a fierce shaking of the head; sometimes loud, sharp ejaculations which are quite meaningless.

It is difficult to describe the phenomenon from its subjective side, as natives are more than usually inexplicit in regard to their sensations. It is commonly said that the oncoming of the seizure is felt in the back, and most often in a sensation of cold, a chill, or a shiver. The first movement is a shudder, and a very characteristic movement of the Taro man is a somewhat exaggerated twitch of the shoulder. More than one informant has said that he felt as if ants were crawling down his back. The

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seizure may apparently be induced by thinking on it. A man sits, I am told, wondering, 'Will it come, will it come?' and finally it does come.

The sensations are felt in the stomach, the legs, and the head. A man made a stirring motion with his forefinger to give some idea of the revolving in his stomach, called *peri peri*. The real or supposed affection of the lower limbs is sufficiently evidenced by the lurching and reeling in which the Taro man so commonly indulges. Some men hear a strong buzzing in their ears, so loud and distracting that they want to shout out. Others say that during the *jipari* they cannot see properly.

The shaking-fit is seen less frequently now than in the earlier days of the cult, and from the various subjects which I have observed myself it would be impossible to set down the regular symptoms of the seizure save in the most general terms. There is a vast variety, and with the many idiosyncrasies of sects and individuals, it is only possible to say that the *jipari* takes the form of purposeless and uncontrolled muscular movements.

A most interesting phase of the *jipari* is its collective character or transmissibility. This, again, is less in evidence now than formerly, though, from its very nature, it is liable to manifest itself at any moment. A number of young men were singing together in the 'boy-house' one evening. Among them were two or three Taro men, but, save for an occasional involuntary shoulder-twitching, resembling a kind of *tic*, the conduct of the singers had been entirely rational. In a pause of the chorus a *Diroga* man from a neighbouring village was heard approaching. Leaping and stamping, shaking his spear with its rattles, and uttering the strange querulous exclamations which are peculiar to *Diroga* men, he emerged from the darkness of the bush into the firelight. Immediately the drums struck up again, and half a dozen of the singers who had hitherto been behaving themselves sensibly were shouting and reeling hither and thither in the darkness. Some things, however interesting, are too

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much for the forbearance of an anthropologist, and it is worth recording that this demonstration ended as quickly as it began.

On another occasion I was observing the behaviour of several *Baigona* men (of whom there are still a few in practice). They were treating a patient, and the proper climax of the treatment was reached when the sick man was raised to his feet and allowed slowly to collapse again in what were really horrifying convulsions. The three doctors threw themselves to the ground in a simultaneous fit (which, if less convincing, was more violent than that of their patient), while I kept myself especially busy with pencil and note-book, thinking I might perhaps be the next victim. Turning to my interpreter I failed to find him at my elbow, where he had been a moment previously, but finally caught sight of him at the other end of the village, where he was staggering hither and thither with half a dozen others. Called back very abruptly he said that he had been unable to contain himself; something had 'gone snap' in his head (a phenomenon which he illustrated by snapping his fingers). He was obviously upset and sorry for his lapse, and for a long time afterwards was almost speechless for shame.

The fact that these seizures may be of a collective nature is too well recognized to need elaborating. We have already seen an instance when Buninia inaugurated the cult at Taututu. Dr. Bellamy has given a description of a similar incident which has been quoted in connexion with the Vailala Madness.[1] It is in fact to this collective nature of the *jipari* that the rapid spread of the Taro cult is primarily due.

The native himself may sometimes recognize that the seizures are transmissible to the mass: 'If many men get *jipari*, then those with them are likely to get it also.' This brings us to the question of native theory upon the *jipari*. It has already been explained that the fact of communicating or transmitting the influence is recognized by

[1] *Anthropology*, Report No. 4, 'Vailala Madness', p. 13.

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the native (pp. 31, 34), though how or why it should pass from one man to another is not made clear. Independently of this communication, however, the native theory of *jipari* is one of possession. The subject is possessed by the *atiti* or spirit, either of the taro itself or of a dead man. We need not worry about the latter distinction as it has been dealt with at some length already (section 5).

The *atiti* is an immaterial thing. In common use, as has been mentioned, it means shadow or reflection. The Taro man often compares it to a breath of wind, *pupu*. It is said merely to 'come' to a man (*gumbari*); sometimes to 'strike' him (*dari*); in pidgin English it is said to 'jump up' on him. One witness explained that it entered his body and rose to his head, where it caused the violent wagging which is the most typical symptom of *jipari*. The shaking-fit is due to the immanence of the *atiti*. It is felt, not seen. Only, it would appear, in dreams or trances does one actually see the spirit of the taro or of the dead. A man may first be seized by the *jipari* and subsequently come to realize that it is a spirit which has entered him and caused it. This revelation usually comes through a dream, as it did in the case of Buninia (p. 14). In one case an informant said that his *jipari* and his dream-visit occurred simultaneously; in another the informant had slept with some taro medicine *bayoga* in his armlet, had visited in his dreams the 'village of the Taro people', and in the morning had experienced his first attack of *jipari*. But the usual sequence, and indeed the natural one, is for the apocalypse to follow the fit.

While native theory as to the cause of *jipari* seems clear enough there is no such certainty regarding the effect of it. It is quite generally professed that oft-repeated shaking makes the taro grow; indeed, an expert may go into the gardens to shake amid the vegetables with the express purpose of benefiting them. But no informant ever gave a satisfactory explanation of how this cause should operate. In so far as it is thought to aid the growth of the taro one can only compare the *jipari* to those instinctive

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bodily movements by which we sometimes seek to expedite or help out a much-desired result, though the movements themselves can have no actual effect upon it.

We may now discuss the important question of how far the *jipari* is voluntary and how far it is involuntary. In native theory there is little doubt on the matter: the genuine shaking-fit only follows, or rather accompanies, possession. In actual fact it is equally certain that some individuals are abnormal and subject to dissociation and minor seizures. Such cases of abnormality are not infrequent. Among the various Taro men mentioned by name in this report there can be little doubt that Buninia, Sihure, and Dasiga of Manau, are somewhat abnormal subjects. There are many others whom I have regarded with the same suspicion. Such men, by reason of their abnormality combined with native gullibility, come to the front in a movement like the Taro cult. They are what is roughly termed neurotic, and we need not accuse them of pretence in their strange freaks of behaviour.

But it is obvious that we cannot class all the votaries of Taro as abnormal. Over against those who are the completely helpless victims of *jipari* in any of its forms, we must set another class of those who more or less deliberately simulate *jipari*. The shaking-fit may, it appears, be successfully *resisted*, and further, it may be *relinquished*. In the first place a man may deny that he is subject to *jipari*, explaining that he is 'hard' (*ngaiba* or *okai*), or 'strong' (*koropa*—the same word is used for a warrior). One village constable, declaring—with how much truth I do not know—that he did not indulge in *jipari*, said that his head was 'as hard as a stone'. The heads of others were 'soft' (*saurapa*). But it came somewhat as a surprise when he went on to explain that the schoolboys who learnt readily were those with the soft heads. It remained doubtful whether resisting the *jipari* was with him a virtue or mere stony indifference. Another informant said it was better to be hard, he only wished he could remain as hard as he used to be. In the

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second place, one who finds continual *jipari* somewhat of a strain or a discomfort, seems able to discontinue it at will. One or two examples have been already given of 'resignations' prompted by the tiresomeness of taboos (p. 33). Another reason is the tiresomeness of the *jipari*, which is sometimes, to say the least, an ungentle pastime. Men have complained that it is 'too much like hard work', and that it gives them backache (vide also p. 67). Thus, even from the native himself, we have virtual admission that a man may submit to or resist the habit of *jipari*, and that he may retain or abandon it as he pleases. Again, many Taro men have with true native obligingness and amiability provided impromptu samples of the shaking-fit in such a whole-hearted fashion that the sham is not easily distinguished from the reality.

These considerations make it seem likely that a great deal of *jipari* is sheer counterfeit—an impression which all who see much of it will probably form. Moreover, when we consider the power, influence, and fame which attach to the Taro leaders, it is easy to imagine that many of the shrewder sort will deliberately assume the symptoms of *jipari* and will continually practise them in order to maintain their position. It is my own impression that a majority of those Taro men who *individually* fall into *jipari* from time to time are pretenders.

But we have seen that whole villages may be at times simultaneously overtaken by the shaking-fit. With the rank and file who fall victims to the *jipari* in its collective form, I believe the symptoms are largely involuntary. In the first place, the force of general and repeated example might easily have the effect of provoking such convulsions on the suggestible and somewhat ill-balanced mind of the native. In the second place, after having yielded to the temptation of *jipari*—for such I believe it would be to a native—he becomes more and more prone to indulge in it. Such somatic movements tend toward automatic reiteration until the subject is exhausted. Thus it probably happens that at a Taro festival many of the excited

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158 revellers are indulging in excesses which for the time being they cannot control. The reasons are, first, the power of universal example, and second, the sad fact that submission may become subjection.

With this third and very large class, however, the *jipari* is not a permanent phenomenon. The ordinary villager is prone to fall into a shaking-fit if others are doing so; but it passes over and, except that his power of resistance is probably weakened, leaves him little the worse. On the whole, I should make the same threefold division among those subject to *jipari* as among those subject to the Vailala Madness, viz.

1. Those who fall into the condition quite involuntarily. Some of these may be in greater or less degree 'Mental' cases.
2. Those who, for motives of their own, simulate the madness without giving way to it.
3. An important intermediate class of those who voluntarily induce the madness and, for the time being, surrender completely to it.[1]

To this I would add a comment which will seem obvious to any one who has often observed natives in the condition of *jipari*. As a collective phenomenon it is largely involuntary; as an individual phenomenon it is largely sham.

It will be necessary to revert to this question when we come to discuss the causes of the Taro cult and the attitude we should adopt toward it. The *jipari* in all its various forms cannot fail to excite our repugnance and certainly requires our careful consideration.

9. *The Taro Man as Doctor, Weather-Magician, and Sorcerer*

791 We have yet to see the Taro man in several subsidiary
156 roles—those of doctor, weather-magician, and sorcerer. There is a tendency in primitive society for many distinct functions to be concentrated in one person of pre-

[1] Report No. 4, 'The Vailala Madness', p. 9.

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curing, it is to be feared, goes the implication of sorcery. It may not be without significance that the two or three instances of implied sorcery which have come to my notice are all associated with *Diroga*.

Within the *Diroga* cult itself there is already disintegration. The majority are *Ki-embo* because of their association with the *ki*, or spear; but there are also *Gishi-embo* and *Asivo-embo*, who affect respectively the *gishi*, or pineapple club, and the *asivo*, or wooden sword. Concerning these latter I have only the scantiest information; and no more regarding a distinction between the 'Bush' *Diroga* men and the 'Salt Water' or coastal *Diroga* men.

There are several other more or less important variants of the Taro cult of which I may describe three, viz. those of the *Eriri* men and the *Hobora* men, and thirdly the cult of Manau.

The *Eriri* or 'Rainbow' men are numerous in the Dobodura district. Some years ago one Aragata was mourning the loss of his brother, and after the Orokaiva fashion was embracing his dead body as it lay on the *habara*, or exposure platform, before burial. When Aragata descended from the *habara* he found his legs unsteady, and was forthwith taken in a fit of *jipari*. In the course of this fit, he says, he became aware in some manner that his dead brother's spirit was the cause of it. Further thrills were in store for Aragata, however. That night he dreamt, and in his dream went in search of his brother. The search was fruitless. Aragata found no trace of his kinsman, but came instead to 'the place of the rainbow', where he met one Songe, a man of long ago. Songe (of whom my informant could give no clear account) questioned him and condoled with him, and finally said, 'I give you Taro' (i.e. I make you a Taro man); 'whenever you see a rainbow you will be seized by *jipari*'. Aragata professed that the sight of a rainbow always had the promised effect upon him, and further, that the rainbow and nothing else could produce that effect. Soon, however, he had an enthusiastic following,

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and it is certain that his followers did not need a rainbow to send them into a fit. The *Eriri* men carry spears and have a more or less distinctive form of *jipari*: they grip the spear and stand, trembling and dithering, for a minute or more at a time. Other *Eriri* men, recognizing their confreres in this condition, will come and shake them by the hand. The aim of the *Eriri* men is primarily to make the taro grow, but one witness informed me that when he saw a rainbow in the sky he would know it was the right time to go pig-hunting.

The *Hobora*, or 'Rooster' men, are widely distributed in the central and southern parts of the Division. The founder of the cult is said to be Garepa of Puhemu. According to Garepa himself, his brother had died and he was mourning, having in his grief actually imposed upon himself a taboo on taro and bananas. In this condition the dead man came to him and caused a fit of *jipari*. Subsequently in a dream he met his brother on the beach near Buna, and was informed that henceforth he was to be a *Hobora* man. *Hobora* is the name both of the domestic fowl and of a certain variety of yam. Garepa was to plant his garden with taro and yams, and also to perform a distinctive dance in imitation of the rooster. The dance (of which he gave a demonstration) was a good example of the Orokaiva native dance, with its usual grace and character. Other informants assured me that Garepa in his dream had actually witnessed a number of domestic cocks performing their dance, but the prophet's own account of his experience was less picturesque. The aim of the *Hobora* men is once more to prosper the gardens, though it does not appear that any special prominence was given to the yam *Hobora*. As a proof of his efficiency Garepa brought four immense taros to exhibit at our interview; these, he said, would show what he could do with his *jipari*. Other exponents of *Hobora*, however, declared that they were not Taro specialists, but curers of the sick.

The Manau cult has been described by others (vide

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ing planter had sent to the master of the launch *Misima*, asking him to call for copra. Explaining how he had come by this letter, Bairi said he had eaten a large pine-apple, and that after (apparently as the result of a disturbance less terrible than he deserved) his spirit rose up into the sky, where he saw Jesus Christ, a white man with a beard. He was informed that 'something had fallen for him', and having been conducted down from the sky by a ladder, subsequently discovered this letter. Mr. Holland was much struck by the man's earnestness in telling the story. Bairi had been instructed by Jesus to visit the Lutheran Mission on the river Waria, where apparently he merely announced himself and then returned. Jesus had also told him that he was to be 'the New Guinea Missionary'.

After this interview with Bairi, Mr. Holland entered Manau and witnessed a service led by Dasiga, who was seated on a box in the midst of the worshippers. The preacher rose to greet him but broke out again into unintelligible incantations, shaking his head, and affecting to read out of the palm of his hand. He would finish his incantation by intoning *Jesu Kerisu kaena-embo*, 'Jesus Christ the man for us'; otherwise his words were entirely meaningless. Mr. Holland asked what he saw in the palm of his hand, and was told that Christ's messages appeared there. Asked more precisely what the messages were, Dasiga replied, 'This must not be written in a book'. 'But', said the missionary, 'God is open and hides nothing.' Admitting this, Dasiga (who must have been something of a dialectician) replied by a question: 'Where do your people go when they die?' 'They sleep, then rise again and appear before God.'

'Well, it is just the same with us,' replied Dasiga, and Mr. Holland abandoned further questioning.

There seems to have been nothing of taro worship in the Manau cult, though it was made plain that the prosperity of the crops depended on a proper observance of the new rites. The *jipari*, however, was as essential

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a feature of this as of the Taro cult. Since the establishment of the Mission Station at Manau (and later at Duvira) by Mr. S. R. M. Gill, the *jipari* has died out.

One of the important beliefs of the Manau prophets was that the *embo betari*, i.e. the dead, were coming back to visit their living friends. Dasiga had seen in a dream a fleet of steamers and canoes filled with spirits of the dead and cruising off shore at night-time. Bia, and subsequently two other men of Sanananda (another village in which the Manau cult took hold), were favoured with the same vision. But at this distance it is not easy to discover the early tenets of the Manau faith: they are probably confused in the memories even of its foremost exponents. This is especially apparent in the matter of Kekesi, the powerful spirit who watched over Mitre Rock near the Mambare mouth. Although Mr. Chinnery could elicit a circumstantial account of Kekesi, his steamer *Kesi*, and his association with the rites of Manau, yet, after only ten years, the association seems to have been forgotten. I heard no mention of Kekesi at Manau. To this farrago of Christianity at Manau contributions must have come from the long-established but distant Anglican stations at Ambase and St. Andrews, and from the Lutheran station at Morobe; and no doubt some of the aping of European habits was introduced by ex-police and indentured labourers. Nowadays, I believe, the village is wholly Christian.

11. *The Causes of the Taro Movement*

The observed facts of the Taro cult having been dealt with it is now permissible to adopt a more critical or explanatory method. Its origin and dissemination have already been treated descriptively. In this section I propose to reconsider these questions and offer certain comments.

Cultural Mutations. The Taro cult followed so closely on the *Baigona* cult that it is commonly said to have 'taken its place' when the latter was suppressed. There is, it is true, a very wide difference between their respective

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doctrines, but they have one highly distinctive and important feature in common, viz. the shaking-fit. Since the shaking-fit is the very life and soul of the Taro cult (its doctrines being of comparatively small import in native estimation), it might even be maintained that Taro had arisen, so to speak, from the ashes of *Baigona*, with certain differences of only secondary significance.

However this may be, we have observed variant cults coming into existence from time to time, some of them showing but slight variations from the original, others differing so importantly as to become rivals of the original. We have marked the native medicine-man's love of independence and notoriety: he longs for the limelight, and there is always an element—large or small—of originality in his inspiration. It is not unreasonable to suppose that motives of jealousy, ambition for notoriety, and love of independence, may give rise to local variations of a truly original nature. The ambitious Taro man seizes upon a new idea and incorporates it into his own version of the cult. As it is surely unnecessary to suppose that these new ideas are introduced from a different culture, we may claim to see a movement growing and changing on its own ground, the seeds of growth being the chance ideas of its followers.

These changes are, as we have seen, often of a trifling nature. But they are not always so. We have briefly discussed the *Diroga*, the *Eriri*, and the *Hobora* cults, and have seen how considerably they differ from the original Taro. The cult of Manau is still more widely differentiated. It matters little whether we regard these as offshoots of the Taro cult or as independent growths; and it matters no more whether we regard Taro itself as an independent growth or as an offshoot from *Baigona*. In either case we see the sudden emergence of highly distinctive types.

Thus we find two kinds of development: one by the addition or substitution of trifling details such as is made by almost every new convert to the Taro cult; the other

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culture contact and transmission. The Taro cult and others of its kindred merely supply some evidence for the old evolutionary hypothesis which is supplementary rather than antagonistic to that of culture contact and transmission. To continue the metaphor again, we might, while making allowance for the gradual change of society by minute variations, lay more stress on the sudden, widespread, and important movements for which I have suggested the name of cultural mutations.

Dreams and Visions and Social Movements. If we examine how these mutations have come about we find that in native theory, and as far as the Taro cult is concerned, it is through the somewhat bizarre agency of a dream or vision. Numbers of such dreams have been described or mentioned in the course of the report. The majority of them, no doubt, are sheer fabrications, designed to secure for the dreamer the credit of direct communication with the spirits. If he has lighted upon some idea which will lend a little individuality to his version of the cult, he will affect to have dreamt it. Then he publishes abroad his idea as if it were conferred upon him in a dream-visitation, and thus wins for it a supernatural sanction. Even when the dream is fictitious it has its effect upon the impressionable native who, as we have observed, is a firm believer in dreams and what they portend.

But there can be no doubt that some at least of the dreams of Taro men and others are genuine. Sometimes the visitation takes the form of vision or hallucination rather than of normal dream. The comparative frequency of mental abnormality among these natives has been remarked. It may be evidenced by trance or seizure, and any visible symptom is regarded as a very strong corroboration of the dream, vision, or hallucination which accompanies it. One highly characteristic phenomenon among the Orokaiva is the retirement into solitude, in which the subject lives like a hare-brained recluse, supporting himself on what he can find, and after

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his forty days and forty nights in the wilderness returns or is rescued by his friends. The native explanation of this curiously frequent phenomenon is that of capture or kidnapping by the spirits of the dead; and the crazy, but by now chastened, victim usually has some astonishing tale of his encounter. Such a case, no doubt, was that of the originator of the *Baigona* cult.

As for the dream of Buninia in which he saw the Taro spirits, there is no conclusive reason to doubt that it was genuine. The fact that he found it, so to speak, very profitable, in that it brought him so prominently before the public eye, is sufficient reason for his dreaming the same dream a number of times. One may as readily believe that the first dream was genuine as that the subsequent dreams were false. In considering the case of Buninia we should bear in mind also the fact that even in his boyhood he was admittedly subject to some kind of seizures. The seizures themselves would be considered to substantiate his dream-theory that they were caused by taro spirits.

In the two cases of the *Eriri* and the *Hobora* men, the founders were both mourning the very recent death of their near relatives. In such circumstances the native gives way to his grief in a manner which we would ourselves consider almost improper, and the distraction of sorrow is more likely to cause mental vagaries in him than it would in those who make a practice of self-control. Again, Dasiga of Manau is a somewhat erratic and ill-balanced character, and there need be no doubt that his visits to heaven and his colloquies with God were, in the first place at any rate, bona-fide visions.

Where such visions are attended or followed by trances, epileptoid seizures, or other visible signs of abnormality, they receive in native eyes a strong confirmation. Such bodily seizures are very commonly ascribed to spirit possession. Even where this is not the case they are queer enough and sometimes horrible enough to strike awe into the hearts of those who wit-

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ness them. Thus the seer, the neurotic, and the madman gain a power and ascendancy over the normal by their very abnormality.

It is not by any means maintained that the mutations of culture have their invariable rise in dreams, sane or insane. But the frequency with which these have been put forward as explanations of the new cults makes it possible that they are at least to some extent the original source of them. If this be really so, then we see movements of importance based on the baseless fabric of dreams or even on the hallucinations of the insane.

The Spread of the Taro Cult. It was suggested that the spread of the Taro movement, rather than its actual origin, was a matter of practical interest. The general methods of its dissemination have already been described. It is here proposed to debate this question anew and to suggest reasons why the dissemination has been so complete and so successful. The matter might be considered from two angles—the acceptability of the cult and the susceptibility of the native.

(1) *The Acceptability of the Cult.* We have seen the reputedly conservative native receiving with open arms a very considerable change in his religious life. But we have also noted the newest or the most startling features of the Taro cult toning down so as to harmonize better with the existent cultural background. I refer to the way in which the worship of the taro spirits, an idea which is alien to native habits of thought, has gradually yielded place to the old-fashioned worship of the dead.

While this adaptation has taken place the general activities of the cult have remained the same. The feasting, the singing, and the placatory offerings are performed or offered with the same zeal, no matter whether they are in behalf of the taro plant itself or of the dead. The *iipari* is still indulged in with the same abandon, no matter whether the taro spirits or the dead have inspired it. This all bears out the view that, in native religion, theory or doctrine is wholly subordinate to action or

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upon to hold a brief for Christianity in particular, yet we may presume that this religion will be supported by the most enlightened of those who are endeavouring to help the native. However, if Christianity is to fill the void in the native's life, if it is to renovate his decaying civilization, it must, I believe, take a very plastic and adaptable form.

(2) *The Susceptibility of the Native.* There can be no doubt that the most potent cause of the rapid spread of the Taro cult was the *jipari* or shaking-fit, and we have now to discuss the marked susceptibility of the native in regard to it. But for this *jipari*, despite the attractiveness of the new movement in native eyes, it might have languished earlier or been confined to narrower limits.

The *jipari* is in itself a very striking manifestation and one which would appeal to the native imagination, especially so in view of the prevalent theory of possession and the power and influence of the possessed. But it is not this so much as the transmissibility of *jipari* which makes it so important an agent in the dissemination of Taro. Metaphorically speaking, the shaking-fit is violently contagious. The manifestation has already been described both as an individual and as a collective phenomenon. We may look for its explanation both in the individual character of the native and in the collective character of the crowd.

The latter subject has been dealt with extensively by psychologists of recent years, notably by McDougall. The exaggerated suggestibility and imitativeness of the members of the crowd or mob and their unconscious or almost wilful surrender of self-control, are too well recognized to need elaborating here. If these characteristics become more marked under the influence of excitement, we can understand why they flourish so remarkably among natives, who are by general consent called excitable. Many similar phenomena have been observed and described, but for a collection of remarkable parallels one should refer to the work of F. M. Davenport called

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Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals.[1] In this book there are gathered together a number of instances from among North American Indians, Negroes, and Europeans in the New and Old Worlds. I quote at length several passages describing instances which resemble the *jipari* in its collective form. The first has reference to the Redskin Shakers of Puget Sound:

'The votaries of the new faith . . . dreamed dreams, saw visions, and were overcome by violent shaking. "With their arms at full length, their hair and arms would shake very rapidly. Gazing into Heaven, their heads would also shake, sometimes for a few minutes, sometimes for a few hours, sometimes for half the night." The shaking took possession of entirely normal people, but it finally became so extreme that it seemed likely to cast great numbers of them into insanity.'[2]

After describing another set of movements among North American Indians known as the 'Ghost-dance Revivals' (in the last decade of the nineteenth century) the author deals with the better-known phenomena of negro revivals:

'At many of the "big quarterlies" and the "protracted meetin's" which are held in the South, there are scenes of frenzy, of human passion, of collapse, of catalepsy, of foaming at the mouth, of convulsion, of total loss of inhibition, compared with the scorching heat of which the Indian ghost-dance seems at times only a pale moon.'[2]

The 'Scotch-Irish Revival in Kentucky in 1800' provides an instance of the same phenomenon among Europeans:

'Next to the "falling" exercise the most notable and characteristic Kentucky phenomenon was the "jerks". The unhappy victim shook in every joint. Sometimes the head was thrown from side to side with great rapidity. Again the feet were affected, and the subject would hop like a frog. Often the body would be thrown violently to the ground, where it would continue to bound from one place to another. Peter Cartwright declares that he had seen more than five hundred persons jerking at once in his congregation.'[2]

[1] Macmillan, 1905.

[2] Davenport, *op. cit.*, pp. 33–4, 53–4, 78–9.

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Even the gibberish of Dasiga (vide pp. 75–6) has its parallels, being a manifestation of religious excitement which is common enough to be given not only a scientific name, *glossolalia*, but also a popular one, 'the Gift of Tongues'. This kind of jabbering was noted as characteristic of the Vailala Madness, when it was called '*djaman*' (German).[1] Mr. Chinnery observed in Dasiga's speech, while the gist of it was unintelligible, a mixture of several Binandele dialects. We may compare a case from primitive China given by Davenport:

'When the supposed "spirit" enters the subject, "the man's eyes close tightly, his whole body trembles, his hands and feet continually move, his hair loosens from the braid—then he begins to speak, and is able to talk not only in his own dialect, but in others as well".'[2]

The author explains that the Gift of Tongues, which has its biblical parallels, was probably always a natural, not a 'spiritual' phenomenon. A quotation makes the explanation clear:

'The "gift" was a feature of the first flush of Mormon fanaticism. . . . "Those who speak in tongues are generally the most illiterate among the 'saints', such as cannot command words as quick as they would wish, and instead of waiting for a suitable word to come to their memories they break forth in the first sound their tongues can articulate, no matter what it is."'[2]

Besides the facts of mob psychology, Davenport calls in the nervous instability of the individual to account for such demonstrations as those described above. This instability he regards as in itself primitive: 'nervous instability appears as a fundamental primitive trait;'[2] 'we may mention together a group of primitive characteristics, the chief of which is nervous instability, with its inevitable accompaniments of remarkable imitativeness and suggestibility and great lack of inhibitive control.'[2]

A more cautious generalization is made by C. G. Seligman:

'It has long seemed to me that one of the characters of those of the

[1] 'Vailala Madness,' p. 6.
[2] Davenport, *op. cit.*, pp. 256, 7, 20, 18.

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more primitive peoples of whom I have had personal experience, Africans, Melanesians, Veddas and up-country Sinhalese, which seemed to differentiate them from ourselves was their greater suggestibility (using the word in its psychological sense) and the ease with which they passed into conditions of dissociation.'[1]

E. N. Fallaize writes of the Malays and related peoples of the Indonesian area that they appear to possess 'a peculiarly highly strung and ill-balanced nervous organization'.[2] This condition has long since been recognized in Malaysia, but of late years investigation—particularly that of Czaplicka—has brought to light many other examples and reveals a very wide distribution for the phenomenon. Whether or no we accept the generalization that nervous instability amounts to a characteristic of primitive peoples, we can hardly avoid admitting that it is characteristic of the primitive inhabitants of Papua.

Before we are in a position to consider the practical treatment of those who indulge in *jipari* we may first debate whether the instability, with the consequent tendency toward *jipari* and similar manifestations, is (1) a racial or a merely primitive characteristic, and (2) whether it is pathological or normal.

As to the first question it might be possible to accept the generalization of Davenport (vide p. 88) with the reservation that the degree of instability varies with different races. According to Seligman the Papuo-Melanesians, though strongly extravert, are less given to ecstasy and hysterical dissociation than are, for example, the Veddas and many African Negroes. He regards extraversion as normal, and characteristic of this as of most other primitive peoples.[3] Admitting such variability we admit that the apparent nervous instability of the savage is to that extent a racial characteristic; and if this be the case it should be possible to determine which races are relatively stable and which relatively unstable. This, however, has not been definitely done, and in the mean-

[1] *J. A. I.*, vol. liv, 1924, p. 14.
[2] 'Some Examples of Collective Hysteria,' *Discovery*, February 1923.
[3] Seligman, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

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time, since the symptoms of nervous instability are so widely spread among primitive peoples, we might safely regard the condition as one which appertains to them mainly by virtue of their primitiveness.

As for the second question—whether such manifestations as the *jipari* are pathological or normal—everything will depend upon our standpoint. It has already been maintained that some of the most prominent of the Taro men are abnormal or eccentric (p. 54). But even with such subjects it is more than doubtful whether their conduct is considered morbid by their fellow villagers. It is not placed in the same class with madness or imbecility (p. 49), but being ascribed to spirit possession is viewed as transcendental rather than pathological. Czaplicka, writing of the hysterical fits of the Siberian shamans, says: 'This is one side of their nature, pathological from our point of view, but normal or supranormal from theirs.'[1] This, I believe, will be equally applicable to those of the Taro men whom we have seen to be eccentric or neurotic.

Regarding the mass of those who fall victims to the *jipari*, it is obvious that they are not abnormal in the estimation of the Orokaiva, but simply, so to speak, elevated. It is equally obvious that, considering the great proportion who have been subject at one time or another to the seizure, we cannot ourselves regard the condition as altogether abnormal. The tendency is apparently a primitive one which may vary in intensity according to race. We cannot fairly lay a charge of abnormality or morbidity against a whole race or people, much less against the whole of primitive society.

However, while we may look upon the tendency as a natural, or at least an excusable, one, we need not entirely condone it or regard it as unalterable. In so far as it is racial it is unalterable; in so far as it is primitive it may be remedied by education. We need to understand the native attitude of appraisement toward the

[1] Czaplicka, *Aboriginal Siberia*, p. 319.

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jipari and similar manifestations. While we regard them as pathological and horrible, he regards them as a sign of power. With him they are not a disease but a gift. As I pointed out in respect of the Vailala Madness, a native who falls in a fit is not ashamed of himself, but rather on the other hand pleased with himself. With ourselves there is a more or less strict standard of self-restraint. The native's standard is far lower. We may see frequent evidences of this in his ebullitions of rage or his prostrations of grief, when he is all too prone to indulge in self-inflicted violence.

We have, I think, given due consideration to the non-volitional aspect of the *jipari*. I now wish to stress the other aspect. It is probably true that we are dealing with people who suffer from nervous instability. To some extent they cannot refrain from *jipari*; but on the other hand there is no doubt that to some extent they could refrain if they wished. I would lay special stress on this absence of or deficiency in a standard of self-control, because herein lies the clue to our treatment of those who engage in *jipari*. If they could be persuaded that *jipari* was a shameful and ridiculous thing, they would be less addicted to it. To alter public opinion on this point is no doubt a difficult matter, for the occasional excesses of religious revivals show the possibility of relapse in societies far more advanced than that of the Orokaiva.

In the meantime, however, as native opinion is so markedly susceptible to white opinion, one might suggest that an unmistakable condemnation or ridicule of *jipari* by the white man might serve to discourage it. It is presumably a highly undesirable practice and should, if possible, be stamped out. It has been the experience of magistrates that firm methods can immediately put a stop to individual cases. As a tangible suggestion one might propose that *jipari* be treated ostensibly as a disease or form of madness, and that any man found practising it be removed to 'hospital' and kept under temporary supervision. The district jail would serve well enough as

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X 794 158 hospital, though there should be a rigid distinction between those who were imprisoned for offences and those who, so to speak, were recuperating after a nervous breakdown. Far be it from me to suggest that their detention should take the form of a rest-cure. After a period of wholesome, and let us hope useful, exercise the patient might be discharged with a fair degree of certainty that he would not fall ill again of the same malady. His power to resist, or at least his will to resist, would be considerably strengthened. It would be necessary to use every care and consideration lest genuine abnormals be subjected to an undeserved and perhaps useless correction; but for the rank and file who give way to *jipari*, and with whom the cause lies in a mere lack of restraint, I think a term in the observation ward would be a very salutary lesson.

The Craving for Excitement. The low standard of self-control with its attendant lack of inhibition has been mentioned as a cause of the *jipari* which admits of a practical remedy. There is another cause, or perhaps rather a favourable condition, which may be countered with an equal chance of success. I refer to the native's craving for excitement.

X 794 158 177 We have seen that European influence is in some respects repressive to the native, and therefore, by blocking the way of old activities, may give rise to new and somewhat startling phenomena, in fact to what we may call social outbursts. The several ways in which our influence has exerted this repression are fairly clear. In the first place by the introduction of steel implements we have considerably reduced the hard work of the native gardener and left him with a good deal of time on his hands. Whereas he must have formerly worked off much of his surplus energy with repeated blows of a stone axe, he now strikes a few blows with a steel axe and his energy remains bottled in his bosom. A far more important consideration is the abolition of tribal warfare, by which he has lost what was probably his foremost

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interest and what provided an outlet for his naturally fierce passions. Sir J. H. P. Murray has truly said that these two facts—the introduction of steel tools and the abolition of tribal warfare—have had a more telling effect on native life than has any other material influence for which we are responsible.[1] In the report on the Vailala Madness I made much of the decay or discouragement of ceremonies. In so far as this is taking place it is another important influence working in the same direction.

The activities which our native followed with the greatest zeal, or which, by their strenuousness, provided an outlet for his energies, are now suppressed. He is allowed more time to idle about his village and brew mischief. The Taro cult comes along with the attraction of novelty. He throws himself into it with an enthusiasm which may well astonish us. The actual shaking-fit means a complete abandonment of self; it is the most novel and exciting feature of the cult, and it is not surprising that a thoroughly bored native should make an orgy of it. There can be no doubt that in the *jipari* and other excesses the native finds some satisfaction—senseless though it be—for his pent-up feelings.

If this be the case it should follow that by providing some more sensible or attractive kind of relaxation, amusement, activity—whatever form it may take—we would profitably divert much of the nervous energy which is poured so wastefully into *jipari*. Elsewhere I have argued that if we would consider the native's happiness we must make what provision we can for his emotional satisfaction. He is now suffering from a lack of *joie de vivre*. He is not getting so much *fun* as he used to. The importance of that point may easily, I think, be under-estimated.

The older ceremonies entail no small amount of excitement, and provide a means of satisfying social feeling as

[1] J. H. P. Murray, *Native Administration in Papua* (Government Printer, Port Moresby), p. 8.

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it rises to a periodical climax. For the most part they are devoid of harm (such harm as there is in them might be expurgated), and sometimes they possess no small artistic value. It would be a pity if these ceremonies should languish entirely, as they now constitute a true native interest which is pursued with some intensity of feeling.

While one may advocate the retention and adaptation of the ceremonies rather than the substitution of anything for them, it is hardly feasible to make the same claim for warfare. A plain substitute is demanded, and no doubt the best substitute for war is a good warlike game. Football, with less of science than of rough play, hockey of the somewhat haphazard kind called 'shinty'—such games as these might enable the bellicose Orokaiva to work off his energy with no more than a little bloodshed. Experience has proved the popularity of games among the natives. It is perhaps only necessary to encourage them and give them a rudimentary organization in order to create a wholesome and interesting form of competition.

12. *Good and Bad in the Taro Cult*

Before deciding what should be our attitude toward the Taro cult we may discuss some of its effects on native culture. The physical effects upon its followers may be dismissed briefly. It is apparently the *jipari* alone which is responsible for any noticeable result of this kind, and it may be that the ill effects of it have been somewhat exaggerated by observers. However, there is good reason to suppose that continued indulgence in the shaking-fit has a bad influence on the nervous system. This may be apparent in the weary, blood-shot eye and the rather vacant or stupefied look of those who are constantly practising it. Further, it is said in the long run to cause wasting and physical deterioration. On the whole, it is probably true that the frequent abandonment of self-control which is the characteristic of *jipari* must be a demoralizing influence and as such have an adverse effect on the system.

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FIVE NEW RELIGIOUS CULTS IN BRITISH NEW GUINEA.

E. W. P. CHINNERY, F.R.A.I., AND
A. C. HADDON, Sc.D., F.R.S.

I.

E. W. P. CHINNERY.

I HAVE recently been engaged in observing the origin of two religous cults known as "Kava-Keva" and "Kekesi." They are animistic practices that, notwithstanding their prohibition, have already become powerful, and extend from the Gira River (8° S. lat.) to Buna Bay.[1]

The belief in ghosts and spirits is a predominant characteristic of the northern native. In almost every tribe I have observed the propitiation of family ghosts with individual offerings of food by ordinary persons to secure the vitality of their food supply, and by sorcerers to stimulate their charms. Ghosts are invoked during ceremonies by divination to reveal crimes and criminals. Food offerings to ghosts are made during death feasts and during certain initiation rites. The house of initiation and the paraphernalia of the dance are believed to have spiritual powers, and when the paraphernalia are thrown into the river at the completion of the rites, they are invoked to smite the enemies of the dancers.

Yet, although the spirits and ghosts are legion, I had nowhere come across any conception of a supreme spirit until the outbreak of the Kava-Keva[2] movement, when the villages

[1] It may be well to note that the Gira River opens at about 8° S. lat. on the north coast of British New Guinea, and that the mouth of the Mamba River is four miles to the south, both being in the Mambare Division. Buna is on the south of Holnicote (Gona) Bay, about 8° 37′ S. lat., and is in the Kumusi Division. Keroro, Mount Victory, is an active volcano, nearly 5000 feet in height, a little to the west of Cape Nelson, which is about 9° S. lat.

[2] "Kava-Keva" is a Motuan word which is used extensively throughout the tribes of British New Guinea by adoption to express a condition of madness or irresponsibility either temporary or permanent.

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concerned discarded individual practices in favour of co-operation; or, more strictly, changed from the worship of individual ghosts to the worship of the "Food-Spirit." The Kava-Keva is, I understand, positively a new idea, and not an attempt to revive old customs. Whilst observing the Kava-Keva rites on the second occasion I invited Mr Copland King, a clergyman of the Anglican Mission, to attend with me, and he has since written a paper on the subject. Mr King and I are the only Europeans who witnessed the beginning of the Kava-Keva rites, and I alone witnessed the beginning of the Kekesi rites. The following account of the two cults is based upon information supplied to me by Boninia and Bia at the inception.

1. THE "KAVA-KEVA" RITES.—Boninia is an elderly native of Taututu, one of the villages of the Dowai-ia division of the Binandere tribe, on the lower Mamba River. He was a man of no reputation as a magician or prophet. Early, however, in 1914 he visited the other villages of his group—Gauoro (on the coast), Duvira, and Tsiu (up the river)—and announced that he had been "struck down" in his garden by the "Spirit of Taro" (the staple diet). He had been told, he said, to warn the people that their dilatory methods of cultivation had given displeasure, and that unless they observed a ritual which had been taught to him, the "Food-Spirit" would destroy their gardens and force them to live on sago. Boninia's message was received without enthusiasm, and the ritual was declined. Nothing more came of the incident until the following November, when a young girl named Dasiga, of the village of Gauoro, developed a condition of mental abnormality. For a day or two she was quite oblivious of her surroundings, and chanted mechanically a new song, which was identified as part of the ritual disclosed by the man Boninia. In response to the request of the people Boninia examined the girl, and, in conformity with his advice, she was taken into the gardens, and there, amongst the taro leaves, as he had foretold, the "Spirit left her," and she recovered her normal state. Two or three days later she returned to her village. Then, almost immediately, she relapsed into her Kava-Keva condition, and simultaneously one other Gauoro girl and four young men "were visited by the Spirit." A second messenger to Boninia found that the "sickness" had appeared in each of the villages of the group, and that several natives were "possessed" and under treatment by Boninia. The headmen of the group were considerably alarmed, and called a meeting in Gauoro. Here those who had been "visited" disclosed the communica-

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158 669 tions of the "Spirit." It was decided that the group villages, acting co-operatively, should propitiate the "visitor," and that the rites taught to Boninia and others should be performed forthwith. So much spontaneity attended the services that on November 25th, when I witnessed the ritual, there were but few who remained uninitiated.

The ceremony, as I saw it, appeared to be controlled by Boninia. He invoked the presence of the "Spirit," and, to the rhythmic drumming of the younger men, he shouted repeatedly *Irie! Irie!* (which are not Binandere words), and gradually worked himself up into a frenzy. The excitement of watching his efforts became too much for some of those present, and in a second or two several men and women became, like him, "possessed." After the manner of drunken men they staggered through the village, falling over obstacles, bumping into trees and houses, their faces twitching and eyes rolling. They exhibited a stilted, jerky movement of arms and limbs and laboured respiration. With the palms of their hands outward, some shrieked, others sobbed, and many were silent. Those who were unaffected continued drumming and chanting in a low key the taro song which the "Spirit" had taught to Boninia. I noticed one of the drummers, who had previously been unvisited, gradually giving way to the feeling. He appeared at first to resist; but, after a short struggle, he displayed the symptoms of the "possession." He staggered a few feet, and then fell to the ground in a fit. The other drummers encircled him, and, changing to quick time, moved round him singing an ordinary food song. At this stage Boninia revived automatically, and treated the boy with vigorous rubbing and slapping, calling repeatedly in his ear *Do! do! do!* At length the boy responded and was placed upright. He was kept moving in order to prevent a relapse threatened by his puffed face and stupefied manner. Then the elder men were treated by Boninia, and they in turn revived the others with similar treatment. All of them appeared strained and drowsy for hours afterwards. During the ceremony those who remained unaffected appeared to be ill at ease, and many of the women exhibited great concern at the behaviour of their children, particularly the mother of the boy "visited" for the first time. The boy told me that the "Spirit" had taught him, when in the fit, the names of certain charms to plant in his garden, and had given him other information which would be passed on as general knowledge to the cult. On a second occasion I saw another man "visited" for the first time, and the procedure was similar throughout.

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Boninia informed me that the precautionary ritual is as follows:—"No weapons of war may be carried in gardens. Gardens are to receive the greatest attention, and to be well fenced and continually weeded. No food is to be wasted. That which cannot be eaten is to be given to the pigs, as also the garbage. Food is to be handled carefully, lest it should be bruised or broken. When cooked it is to be boiled in a vessel. The practice of burning food in the fire must be abandoned." 668 784

The song of the "Food-Spirit" is:—"*Ba taba Ai-adara!*" "*Ba porovi Ai-adara!*" *Ba* signifies taro, and *taba* and *porovi* varieties of the same. Each kind of taro is thus recited and followed by the song-words *Ai-adara* (in which words the worship lies). Following the song of the taro there comes the worship of the sugar-cane (*do*), "*Do beguma Ai-adara*," and of the banana (*bido*), "*Bido oira Ai-adara*," the varieties of both being mentioned. Other garden-foods follow in sequence. 668 534

In January 1915 Tongua of Duvira was passing a heap of taro lying in the sun outside the village of Buadi on the middle Gira River. The people of this village had not adopted the cult. Tongua fell into a fit, and on reviving, gathered the taro and placed it in shelter. At the same time he took the opportunity of disclosing the teachings of the "Food-Spirit," who he said was very angry with the person that had left the taro lying in the sun. 668 184

The practices I have been describing being undesirable were for a time abandoned. Each man who had been "visited" took a long swim in the Mamba River to shake off the "sickness." Boninia, however, informed me that it would not be possible for him to shake off the "sickness" so long as he remained on the Mamba, and that he had received permission to visit the Kumusi. My friend Mr Beaver and I visited the dancers in December, and requested them to perform the Kava-Keva, but they excused themselves on the ground that the "Spirit" had left them, and that the "sickness" was not a condition to be produced at will. As a general practice, the Kava-Keva no longer exists. But isolated cases have been noticed throughout the two divisions as far as Buna, and particularly in and around the headquarters of the Anglican Mission, which is near the mouth of the Mamba. The noted prophets of the various tribes and villages on the coast have adopted the "Spirit," and the Kava-Keva and Kekesi cults threaten to break out in strong force along the whole northern coast from the Gira to Buna at any time, the cults, however, maintaining their rivalry. 668 158 184

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668 I witnessed the rites of Kekesi on November 26, 1914. They were performed with every appearance of sincerity and fanaticism. The man Yavevi conducted the ceremony, and seemed to be under the hypnotic influence of the man Bia, who remained throughout silent and carefully watching us. When the proceedings at all dragged, Bia would instil enthusiasm by throwing himself into a fit of convulsions from the [158] waist upwards, jumping violently up and down while remaining in a sitting posture, and babbling intelligibly, the saliva dropping from his mouth. In this condition he would be joined by Yavevi and some of the other men, whilst those remaining unaffected would redouble their efforts. Yavevi and Bia revived automatically, and Yavevi conducted the others through their prayer-like devotions.

The rites were forbidden in November, but shortly afterwards—in December and January—Bia paid stealthy visits to the villages of the Gira River. And at the end of December the whole of the people of the Gira from the coast to Tabara and the Eia River in the west were performing the Kekesi rites as described above, with additional songs.

[533]

Gagara ba nato mi badari
Girl taro mine with to grow up

Taba oro gaingumena
(Taro) greeting I have come to see

Ba warivari
Taro leaves shaking in the wind

Ba ro beroberobe
Taro grow quickly

Ba sipo-tau-iegi
Taro daylight

Notwithstanding the prohibition, the rites have been introduced by Yavevi to the coastal tribes as far south as Buna Bay. Yavevi informed me, on one occasion, that he was influenced by Bia, and that he could not possibly refrain from indulging in fits when Bia was near him. On that account he was sent to Buna, where it was thought he would be beyond the influence of Bia. Yet shortly after leaving the Mambare he returned to Bia, and, upon once more reaching Buna, commenced the Kekesi teachings in that place.

E. W. P. CHINNERY.

Kikori.

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coast as far as the old Anglo-German boundary and for a long way up the rivers of the Kumusi Division. Moreover, the cult is still spreading. Needless to say, the Baigonas have to pay for their instruction. One or two men in a village go through a period of tuition, and, on their return, initiate the rest of the villagers, not into the positions which they themselves hold, but into a belief in their new powers. This is effected by a ceremony in which the people are smeared over with some stuff from the bush, and the Baigona gives each one a smack and sends him to wash in the sea. The ceremony gets its name from the "washing." Dr Copland King has seen Baigonas use massage on a patient. They massage the arms, for instance, down to the fingers, and then, as they say, pull Baigona out from the finger tips. The young men of the village, standing round the patient, sing a song, which seems to be the usual string of meaningless words. Only two recognised drugs are used, —viz. *Euphorbia pilulifera*, the "asthma herb of Queensland," which is burnt with the coral when preparing lime for chewing with betel-nut, and *E. Drummondii*, also used medicinally by Australian settlers, and eaten with paw-paw when chewing the nut. Various other plants are employed as drugs, but only such as are beneficial. All this was obviously a very subtle move on the part of Maine. How can the Government interfere in such circumstances? At the same time, the Baigona have powers of life and death, because if they do not choose to give the patient these drugs, or, in other words, if the patient does not pay enough for them, he dies; for the Papuan, like most savages, is peculiarly susceptible to impression, and can fall sick, or even die, without any corresponding physical cause. The Baigona does not work in his garden. He will not drink plain water, but only coconut milk. He pays more attention to dressing his hair and decorating his face with red paint than other people; he has not much else to occupy his time, as either from fear or in payment his village companions do his garden work for him. Very often during the evening in the village the Baigona goes into a fit, passing into a trance. It begins with violent shivering, after which the man falls to the ground and becomes insensible, uttering spasmodic bursts of rapid talk. His people cover him with a mat, and sit around listening and applauding. Dr Copland King has not been able to make sense of what he says on such occasions, and does not know whether the people understand it either. The main feature of the cult is the prohibition to kill snakes, crocodiles, monitor lizards, and